

general as to make any decisive action upon them somewhat difficult, if not impossible, and I am now writing principally for the purpose of requesting a more specific statement of the facts.

"You express in substance the conviction that the African slave trade is carried on extensively by American citizens in American ships fitted out by American capital. It is desirable that we should know what facts we may expect will be found upon this subject when it comes to be fully developed. You add that it may require a startling expenditure of the public money to detect these criminals and bring them to justice. What is your estimate of the probable cost? I do not desire this latter question to be answered because I think that any mere consideration of dollars and cents should be put in competition with the laws of the land, but it is necessary to be prepared with the proper amount, whether it be little or much.

"Upon ascertaining the facts as definitely as possible, I propose to make an application to Congress for a specific appropriations to meet expenses. \* \* \* I am aware that the amount of your personal responsibilities in these cases has already been large enough, and I do not propose to increase it; whatever you say, therefore, upon this subject, will be treated as confidentially as you please.

"It is proper I should add, that under no circumstances can the government consent to the abandonment of the prosecutions now pending in Savannah. Nor do I think we can have any hope of even partial success without the continuance of your service.

"I am respectfully, yours, etc.,

"J. S. BLACK."

"Hon. Henry R. Jackson, Washington, D. C."